Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1. (Previously Presented) A sample carrier comprising:

a structural array; and

a plurality of discrete sample nodes; each of said plurality of discrete sample nodes being removably attached to said structural array at a respective attachment point and comprising a sample support medium operative to carry a discrete sample in desiccated form.

2. (Previously Presented) The sample carrier of claim **1** wherein each of said plurality of discrete sample nodes is operative to carry a biological sample.

3. (Original) The sample carrier of claim **2** wherein said biological sample is a protein.

4. (Original) The sample carrier of claim **2** wherein said biological sample is a polynucleotide.

5. (Original) The sample carrier of claim **4** wherein said polynucleotide is DNA.

6. (Previously Presented) The sample carrier of claim **1** wherein each of said plurality of discrete sample nodes is operative to carry a non-biological sample.

7. (Original) The sample carrier of claim **1** further comprising identifying indicia.

8. (Original) The sample carrier of claim **7** wherein said indicia are decipherable by an optical sensor.

9. (Previously Presented) The sample carrier of claim **1** wherein each of said plurality of discrete sample nodes comprises an associated transceiver operative to transmit a unique signal.

10. (Original) The sample carrier of claim **9** wherein said transceiver is further operative to receive a control signal from a remote device.

11. (Previously Presented) The sample carrier of claim **1** wherein each of said plurality of discrete sample nodes is solid.

12. (Previously Presented) The sample carrier of claim **1** wherein each of said plurality of discrete sample nodes is porous.

13. (Previously Presented) The sample carrier of claim **1** wherein each of said plurality of sample nodes is constructed of said sample support medium.

14. (Currently Amended) The sample carrier of claim **1** ~~13~~ wherein said sample support medium comprises cellulose.

15. (Currently Amended) The sample carrier of claim **1** ~~13~~ wherein said sample support medium comprises a polymer.

16. (Original) The sample carrier of claim **15** wherein said polymer is polystyrene.

17. (Currently Amended) The sample carrier of claim **1** ~~13~~ wherein said sample support medium is derivatized.

18. (Original) The sample carrier of claim **17** wherein said sample support medium is positively charged.

19. (Original) The sample carrier of claim **17** wherein said sample support medium is negatively charged.

20. (Previously Presented) A sample carrier comprising:

a plurality of structural arrays supported in a predetermined spatial relationship; and

a plurality of discrete sample nodes; wherein each of said plurality of discrete sample nodes is removably attached to one of said plurality of structural arrays at a

respective attachment point and comprises a sample support medium operative to carry a discrete sample in desiccated form.

21. (Original) The sample carrier of claim **20** wherein each of said plurality of structural arrays is supported in a predetermined spatial relationship relative to a respective sample container.

22. (Original) The sample carrier of claim **20** wherein each of said plurality of structural arrays is supported in a predetermined spatial relationship relative to a respective well of a multi-well plate.

23. (Previously Presented) The sample carrier of claim **20** wherein each of said plurality of discrete sample nodes is operative to carry a biological sample.

24. (Original) The sample carrier of claim **23** wherein said biological sample is a protein.

25. (Original) The sample carrier of claim **23** wherein said biological sample is a polynucleotide.

26. (Original) The sample carrier of claim **25** wherein said polynucleotide is DNA.

27. (Previously Presented) The sample carrier of claim **20** wherein each of said plurality of discrete sample nodes is operative to carry a non-biological sample.

28. (Original) The sample carrier of claim **20** further comprising identifying indicia.

29. (Original) The sample carrier of claim **28** wherein said indicia are decipherable by an optical sensor.

30. (Previously Presented) The sample carrier of claim **20** wherein each of said plurality of discrete sample nodes comprises an associated transceiver operative to transmit a unique signal.

31. (Original) The sample carrier of claim **30** wherein said transceiver is further operative to receive a control signal from a remote device.

32. (Previously Presented) The sample carrier of claim **20** wherein each of said plurality of discrete sample nodes is solid.

33. (Previously Presented) The sample carrier of claim **20** wherein each of said plurality of discrete sample nodes is porous.

34. (Previously Presented) The sample carrier of claim **20** wherein each of said plurality of discrete sample nodes is constructed of said sample support medium.

35. (Currently Amended) The sample carrier of claim **20 ~~34~~** wherein said sample support medium comprises cellulose.

36. (Currently Amended) The sample carrier of claim **20 ~~34~~** wherein said sample support medium comprises a polymer.

37. (Original) The sample carrier of claim **36** wherein said polymer is polystyrene.

38. (Currently Amended) The sample carrier of claim **20 ~~34~~** wherein said sample support medium is derivatized.

39. (Original) The sample carrier of claim **38** wherein said sample support medium is positively charged.

40. (Original) The sample carrier of claim **38** wherein said sample support medium is negatively charged.

41. (Withdrawn; Currently Amended) A method of transferring a specimen to a sample carrier; said method comprising:

providing a sample carrier comprising a structural array supporting a plurality of discrete sample nodes; each of said plurality of discrete sample nodes being removably attached to said structural array at a respective attachment point and comprising a sample support medium operative to support a sample of said specimen in desiccated form; and

contacting said plurality of discrete sample nodes to said specimen.

42. (Withdrawn) The method of claim **41** wherein said specimen is a solid.

43. (Withdrawn) The method of claim **41** wherein said specimen is gaseous.

44. (Withdrawn) The method of claim **41** wherein said specimen is a liquid.

45. (Withdrawn) The method of claim **41** further comprising selectively applying a preservative to said plurality of discrete sample nodes subsequent to said contacting.

46. (Withdrawn) The method of claim **45** wherein said preservative is operative to desiccate said specimen transferred to said plurality of discrete sample nodes.

47. (Withdrawn) The method of claim **41** further comprising washing said plurality of discrete sample nodes subsequent to said contacting.

48. (Withdrawn) The method of claim **41** further comprising allowing said plurality of discrete sample nodes to desiccate subsequent to said contacting.

49. (Withdrawn; Currently Amended) A method of transferring specimens to a sample carrier; said method comprising:

providing a sample carrier comprising a plurality of structural arrays, each of said plurality of structural arrays being supported in a predetermined spatial relationship relative to a respective specimen container and supporting a plurality of discrete sample nodes; each of said plurality of discrete sample nodes <u>being removably attached to said structural array at a respective attachment point and</u> comprising a sample support medium operative to support a sample of a respective specimen in desiccated form; and

contacting said plurality of discrete sample nodes supported by selected ones of said plurality of structural arrays to said respective specimen.

50. (Withdrawn) The method of claim **49** wherein said contacting comprises bringing said plurality of discrete sample nodes supported by each of said plurality of structural arrays into contact with a specimen in said respective specimen container.

51. (Withdrawn) The method of claim **49** wherein said respective specimen is a solid.

52. (Withdrawn) The method of claim **49** wherein said respective specimen is gaseous.

53. (Withdrawn) The method of claim **49** wherein said respective specimen is a liquid.

54. (Withdrawn) The method of claim **49** further comprising applying a preservative to said plurality of discrete sample nodes supported by selected ones of said plurality of structural arrays subsequent to said contacting.

55. (Withdrawn) The method of claim **54** wherein said preservative is operative to desiccate said respective specimen transferred to said plurality of discrete sample nodes.

56. (Withdrawn) The method of claim **49** further comprising washing said plurality of discrete sample nodes subsequent to said contacting.

57. (Withdrawn) The method of claim **49** further comprising allowing said plurality of discrete sample nodes to desiccate subsequent to said contacting.

58. (Previously Presented) A sample carrier comprising:

a structural array comprising a plurality of discrete sample nodes; wherein each of said plurality of discrete sample nodes is removably attached to said structural array at a respective attachment point and comprises a discrete sample support medium operative to support sample material in desiccate form; and

a specimen carried by said sample support medium at one or more of said plurality of discrete sample nodes.

59. (Original) The sample carrier of claim **58** wherein said specimen is biological.

60. (Original) The sample carrier of claim **59** wherein said specimen is a protein.

61. (Original) The sample carrier of claim **59** wherein said specimen is a polynucleotide.

62. (Original) The sample carrier of claim **61** wherein said polynucleotide is DNA.

63. (Original) The sample carrier of claim **58** wherein said specimen is non-biological.

64. (Original) The sample carrier of claim **58** wherein said sample support medium is solid.

65. (Original) The sample carrier of claim **58** wherein sample support medium is porous.

66. (Original) The sample carrier of claim **58** wherein said sample support medium comprises cellulose.

67. (Original) The sample carrier of claim **58** wherein said sample support medium comprises a polymer.

68. (Original) The sample carrier of claim **58** wherein said sample support medium is derivatized.

69. (Original) The sample carrier of claim **58** wherein said sample support medium is treated with a chemical compound.